



FORWARD MARCH OF AMERICA

EXHIBIT OF THE ELECTRIC UTILITIES AT THE WORLD'S FAIR

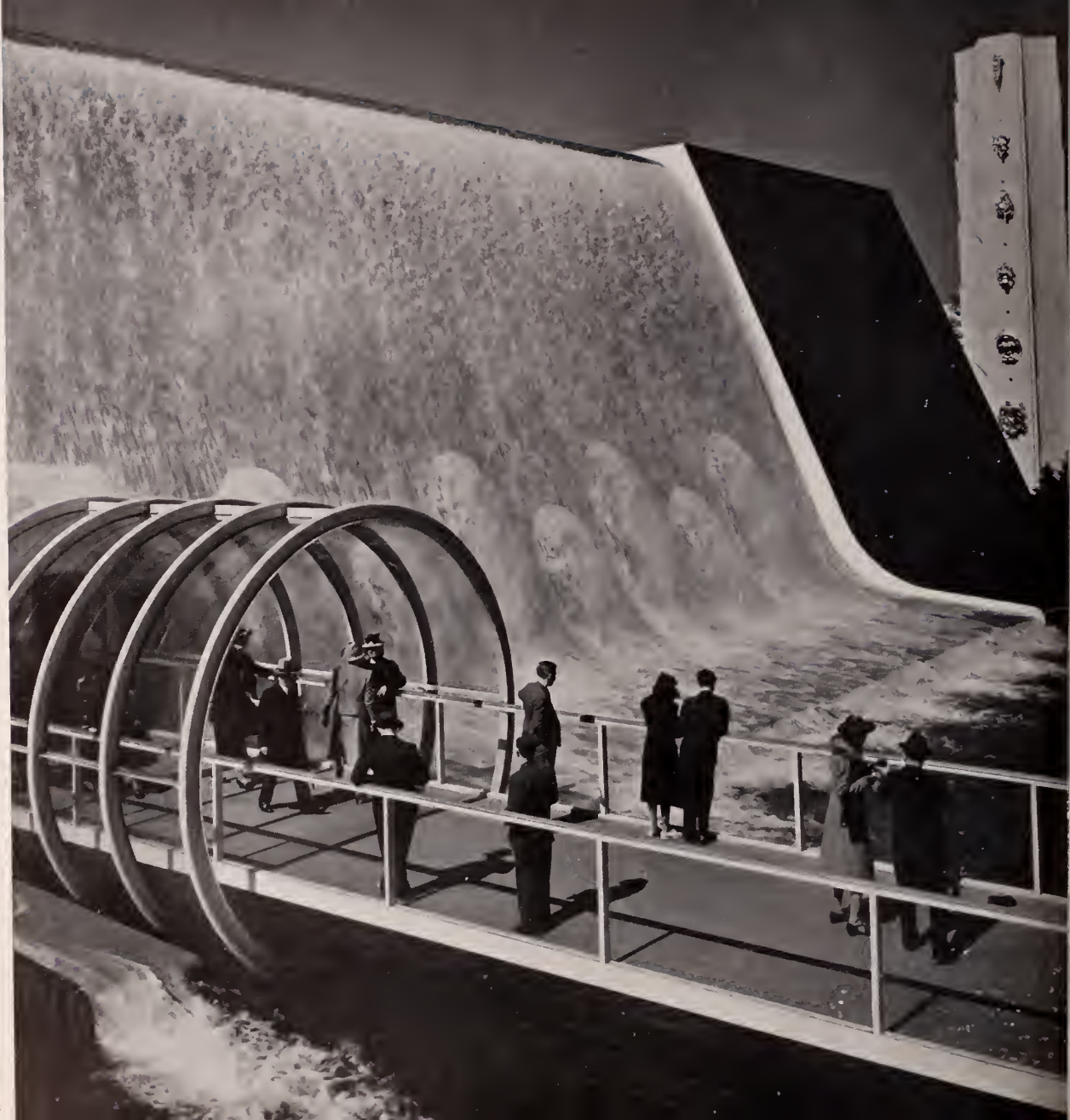
Henry Rohrig.

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The waterfall at the Electric Utilities Exhibit — a mecca for camera fans. 16,000 gallons of water per minute thunder over the weir.

Among the numerous pictures of the New York World's Fair published in its World's Fair issue, U. S. CAMERA, 1939, selected seven for special display. Two were shots of the Electric Utilities Exhibit. This is one; the other is the Street of Yesterday.



EVERY
DURST



EARLY BEGINNINGS

OF THE ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER COMPANIES

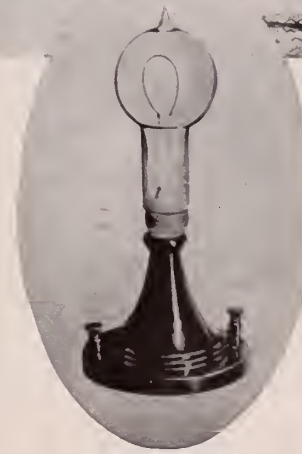
WHEN you entered the Street of 1892 in FORWARD MARCH OF AMERICA, the Electric Utilities exhibit at the Fair, you saw little evidence that electricity was really in use.

Yet the electric company was celebrating its Tenth Anniversary, and much had happened since that day in 1882 when Thomas Alva Edison started two engines in the Pearl Street station of the Edison Electric Illuminating Company in New York City — the first electric company in the world.

But there was trouble aplenty ahead for the new company. Not more than three men really understood the machinery. Ludicrous and frightening things happened. One mechanic put an oil can between two conductors and was a badly frightened man when the can melted away as quickly as the oil it contained. Another workman using a screwdriver was horrified to see it burn away in his hands.

In spite of difficulties, within fourteen months the company was serving 508 customers with electric light. By 1892 electric companies had started all over the country and the young industry's customers had grown to 40,000; electric lights were slowly replacing the gas street lamps; stores and factories were beginning to use electricity for lighting and a few small motor applications. The housewife, however, still considered it "new-fangled" and would have none of it.

But the FORWARD MARCH OF AMERICA with electricity had begun!



The birthplace of the electric light and power industry—the Pearl Street station in the shadow of the new Brooklyn Bridge in New York City. Opened by Thomas A. Edison, September 4th, 1882.

The first successful incandescent lamp, developed by Thomas A. Edison. Shedding only a feeble light, these early bulbs cost \$1.50 each!



It's quaint and charming, isn't it? The cobblestone street, the maze of wires with the inevitable kite, the gas street lights, the houses with basement kitchens, stoops and first floor parlors, the old-fashioned shops.

The eyes of many visitors to the Street of Yesterday have filled with nostalgic memories as they wandered down the street and peered into the houses and stores — the harness and saddle shop, with the wooden Indian in front . . . the lighting fixture store (dealing mainly in oil lamps) . . . the theatrical emporium crowded to the doors and piled to the ceiling with merchandise . . . the men's clothing store with mustachioed wax dummies . . . the theatre with its "mellerdrama" posters . . . the hair-dressing parlor with its display of wigs, transformations and "rats."

(SPECIAL NOTE TO THE LADIES: THE NEXT TIME YOU GO TO YOUR MODERN BEAUTY SALON WITH THE LATEST WORD IN ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT, THINK OF THE LADY WHOSE HIP-LENGTH TRESSES HAD TO BE SLOWLY DRIED WITH A PALM LEAF FAN!)

Almost every visitor who remembered the early 1890's found something in the Old Street that touched a memory chord. *"It's just like the street where I lived when I was a boy!"* *"We had a parlor exactly like that when I was a girl — horsehair sofa, whatnots and everything!"* *"I remember shops just like these!"*

Aside from sentimental memories, what was life really like in 1892, and would any of us actually want to go back to those days?

In the Street of Yesterday you saw dim lighting, homes with no conveniences, dingy shops.

**BUT THE FORWARD MARCH OF AMERICA
WITH ELECTRICITY WAS PROGRESSING!**

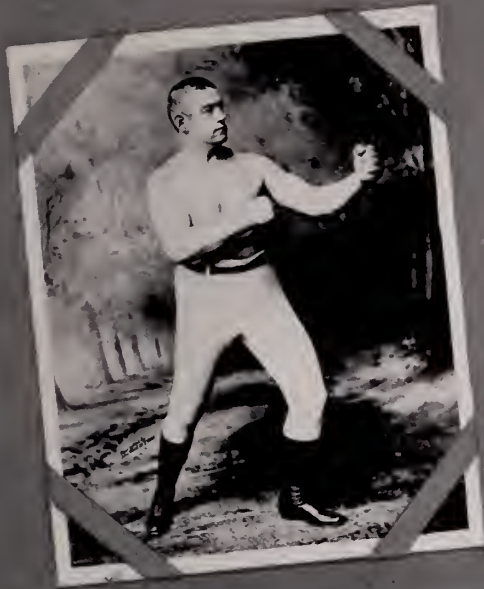


1892



1892





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The steam locomotive and the horse-drawn streetcar were the last word in transportation in the "horse and buggy" days. When the electric trolleys first appeared on the street people gasped at the sight and exclaimed "What *will* they do next?"

The feeble efforts of the telephone, telegraph and cables were still marvels.

Twelve to fourteen hours a day, six days a week, were not unusual working hours in industry; the lighting was bad; the overhead belting and shafting (to connect each piece of machinery with the steam engine or water wheel) was a constant hazard so that industrial accidents were common; manufactured goods were luxuries few people could afford; transportation was slow so workers perforce had to live close to factories and mills, resulting in congestion and bad living conditions in cities and towns.

These are some of the things that are usually forgotten when people reminisce about the so-called "Gay Nineties."

They remember the thrill of the old fire engine with clouds of smoke and horses dashing madly down the street; the great John L. Sullivan; Lillian Russell and other famous beauties of her day; the Floradora girls; how the bloomer girls shocked a nation. (*Note the latest in bathing suits!*)

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Hope he reaches that soap!

The Saturday night bath has been a popular joke, but scenes like the one in the upper left were not uncommon in the 1890's when a bath was not a mere matter of turning a faucet. If your house boasted a bathroom you were the envy of your friends.

*(Remember the drip pan under the ice-box that in spite of all your care you sometimes forgot?)*

The women of those days remember vividly the back-breaking work in the home — lighting coal and wood fires, carrying pails of coal and ashes, scrubbing wood floors, cleaning rugs with a broom (*and plenty of elbow grease*), cooking, baking, preserving, with a temperamental stove.

Washday and ironing day were nightmares — bending over a scrubbing board for hours at a time, emptying tubs of water and refilling them time after time, and when the clothes were dry, going back and forth, back and forth, from stove to ironing board with cumbersome sadirons either too hot or too cold.

Many a visitor to the Street of Yesterday has shaken her head as she peered into the basement kitchens, as much as to say, "*I remember those kitchens, all right!*"

*(The good old days!)*

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**THE FORWARD MARCH OF
AMERICA WITH ELECTRICITY
WAS TO CHANGE ALL THIS!**

The kind of place where business was done in 1892 — the Electric Company office in the Street of Yesterday.

Below: A modern office and display room.



THE AVENUE OF TOMORROW AND



Goodbye to the gloom of the 90's! Here is the latest word — and still later — in architecture and lighting, in window display. No street of dreams, this, but a rapidly approaching reality in American cities as the World of Today moves into Tomorrow . . . with Electricity.

THE WORLD OF TODAY...

"THIS is more like it!" said millions of people as they stepped from the Old Street into the Avenue of Tomorrow. The broad, well-lighted street . . . the attractive display windows . . . the smart clothes for men and women . . . the home conveniences . . . the small luxuries that go to make up joy of living . . . the streamlined automobiles . . . all these bespeak a commercial center keyed to spacious living.

Even more than is apparent, the Avenue is symbolic of electricity's contribution to progress — *the FORWARD MARCH OF AMERICA*.

Today, every city and town is electrified; more than 1,750,000 farms. Electricity — in 1892 a mysterious force lighting a few lamps and turning a few motors — has become an important factor in our present-day world . . . in aviation and transportation, science, communications, industry, commerce, and everyday home life.

Airplanes, fast trains and ships, well-lighted highways, have brought distant cities and towns closer together. The telephone, telegraph, cables, short-wave radio, have annihilated time and space, making the news of the world instantly available. Radio, television, motion pictures give us entertainment, news, sports.

Mass production, with electric power, has put the products of industry within the reach of everyone. Workers' hours have been reduced, wages increased. Because of the availability of electric power everywhere in the country, industry has spread out, locating plants where natural advantages are greatest, relieving congestion in cities and making for better living conditions for the workers.

In the home — both city and country — electricity has brought comforts and conveniences undreamed of in the 90's.

Electricity brings us light, heat and cold; creates ideal weather conditions through air conditioning; regulates our swiftly moving traffic; guards our water supply; helps protect our homes from fire and theft. Almost everywhere, seen and unseen, electricity plays a part — small or large.

Higher efficiency in production and distribution of electricity and wider utilization have made it possible to reduce the cost of electric service to about one-fifth of what it was in 1892, and this in spite of higher costs of labor and materials and greatly increased taxes.

We have come a long way in accomplishment since 1892 and the private electric light and power companies are proud to have made a contribution to that progress — *the FORWARD MARCH OF AMERICA*.

Let us look briefly at our World of Today.

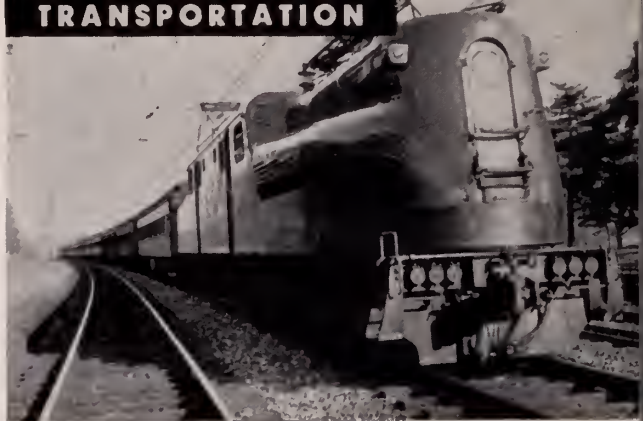




AVIATION AND TRANSPORTATION THROUGH ELECTRICITY

An airport beacon sweeps the night away and a great sky-liner glides safely to earth "on the radio beam" . . . a ship at sea "hears the weather" and changes course . . . along lighted highways and bridges the automobiles of pleasure and commerce roll smoothly . . . a streamlined train flashes by. Transportation today! Through the air, over water and across land, man's carriers are guided, controlled, driven — with speed and precision — by electricity.

AVIATION

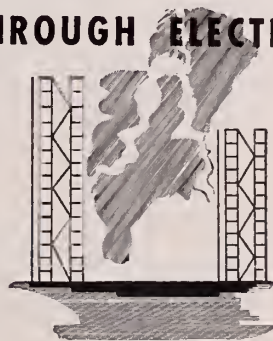




Radio, television and motion pictures are only a few of the scores of new industries — with their millions of new jobs — that electricity has helped create . . . to make life in the World of Today immeasurably fuller and more enjoyable than it was in the 90's. In medicine and surgery new methods are constantly being developed and new vistas of scientific knowledge opened — by means of electricity.

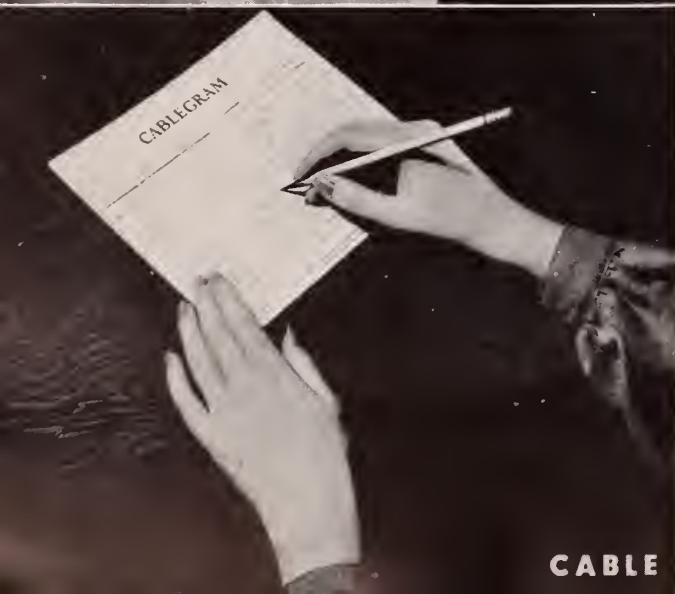


SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS THROUGH ELECTRICITY



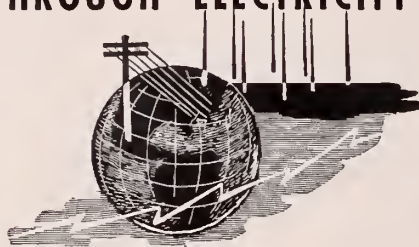


TELEPHONE



CABLE

COMMUNICATIONS THROUGH ELECTRICITY



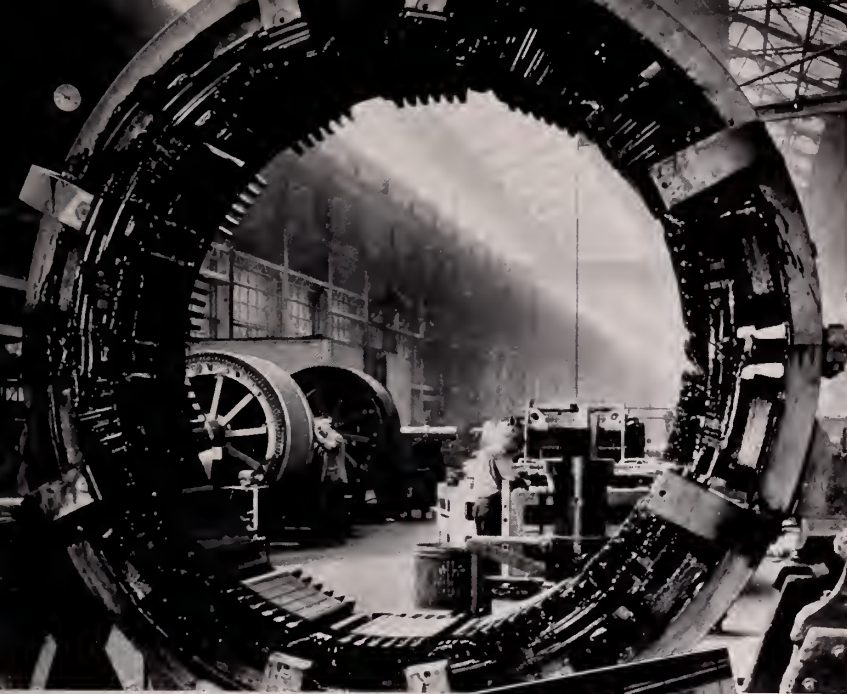
No longer do time and space limit man's voice and man's thought. A friend across the continent or across oceans is as near as your telephone; a constant stream of telegrams and cablegrams carries the world's messages; radio spans the skies to keep nations in touch. News is flashed everywhere instantly — via electrical communications.



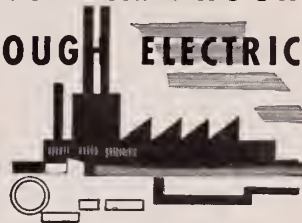
TELEGRAPH



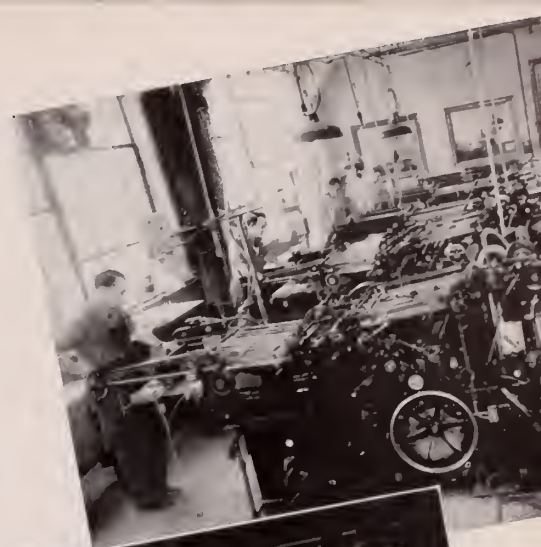
SHORTWAVE RADIO



INDUSTRIAL PROGRESS THROUGH ELECTRICITY



Electric power has made mass production possible. Volume has gone up, costs down. Factories are cleaner, brighter, safer . . . no maze of belting and shafting here! To the worker have come higher wages, shorter hours, new jobs. To all of us a better standard of living — through electricity.



RETAIL SHOWMANSHIP THROUGH ELECTRICITY



The store closes, but selling goes on — by means of artistically lighted windows that dramatize the wares they display. Remember the gloomy, drab windows in the Old Street of the 90's? The merchant of Today knows that effective lighting, outside and inside the store, is his invaluable ally.





Electricity not only lights the home of Today with new beauty; it heats it in winter and cools it in summer. In the kitchen, food is prepared, cooked and kept fresh, dishes are washed — all electrically. The washing machine, ironer and electric iron have banished terror from the hardest domestic task. Throughout the house, appliances cut work and work time, raise comfort and health standards — with low-cost electricity.

HOME COMFORT THROUGH ELECTRICITY



ELECTRICITY IN THE FORWARD MARCH OF AMERICA

The story of electricity and its role in human progress began long ago; yet it is ever new, ever continuing through still brighter chapters. In the spectacular Colorvarium, the inspiring saga is reviewed in these words:

In the beginning, God created the heaven and earth, and the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And God said "Let there be light" — And there was light.

And in that far-off era, prehistoric Man sits within the Cypress shade, and lo! the light of day begins to wane. First a vapor, then thick clouds obscure the sun, and from the rim of the horizon comes a strange and awful noise, a terrifying rumble that seems to shake the very earth itself. Then great, jagged, cruel stabs of light streak across the sky. Onward they come, noise and light, deafening and blinding in their sweep. Suddenly—Lightning!

And through ensuing ages, Man dreams a dream. He dreams of conquering and harnessing that frightful force, but little is done until thousands of years later. Now, an inquisitive gentleman in periwig and pantaloons plays with a kite. His name is Benjamin Franklin. He harnesses a spark of that lightning and brings to realization Man's dream. The first step of the trail is blazed. The way is open for electricity's place in the Forward March of America!

The years go on. And then, a wizard passes that spark of Franklin's lightning through a bottle-like bulb. Thomas Alva Edison has brought electricity to the world, and the march of progress begins in earnest. Led by Edison and other men of vision, the cavalcade of electricity moves forward. A new era comes to America!

Only 58 years ago, the first electric light plant opened its doors on Pearl Street, New York City. It served a territory of one square mile, but that modest plant generated the current that fired the enthusiasm of a nation — an enthusiasm expressed not in words alone, but after the American fashion — in faith, and action! More and larger generating plants had to be built — Americans built them! Inventive frontiers had to be crossed — Americans crossed them! Capital in never-ending flow was needed — Americans provided it! Faith and cooperation were re-

quired — Americans had it in abundance! It was these Americans who created and built the electric utility industry; who made it possible for electricity's friendly light to shine in every corner of our country.

This, then, is the saga of an industry; the magnificent story of a dream that began in the prehistoric darkness of the world, grew in scope with man's intelligence, and swept on to thrilling climax as modern men of genius brought the dream to full realization. But this story of accomplishment is still in the writing: Each day brings new scientific marvels to add to the health, wealth and happiness of mankind.

Isn't it strange that we Americans so often take these accomplishments for granted? And for the future — Thomas Edison has left us a two-fold heritage: electricity itself, and the responsibility to see to it that its possibilities are fully realized. The electric utility companies of America have accepted this responsibility; the result has been constant research and experimentation, ever-increasing efficiency. Given freedom and unfettered opportunity, these same utility companies will continue to carry electricity's swift, white light always onward — in THE FORWARD MARCH OF AMERICA.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Electric Utilities Exhibit Corporation acknowledges with grateful appreciation the wholehearted cooperation of the following:

Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company, Pittsburgh, Pa.: for the Pittco Store Fronts used exclusively in the Avenue of Tomorrow. These fronts of plate glass, Carrara Structural Glass, PC Glass Blocks and Pittco Metal are responsible for the attractive outward appearance of the stores.

The Copper and Brass Industry: for the copper, brass and bronze materials used in the construction of the Avenue of Tomorrow, the Lounge, the Modern Electric Company office and the exterior allegorical screen.

Oppenheim Collins & Company, Inc., New York: for the imagination and ability they have shown in selecting and portraying women's fashions in the windows of the Avenue of Tomorrow.

Weber & Heilbronner, New York: for their excellent taste and skill in assembling and displaying men's fashions in the windows of the Avenue of Tomorrow.

Walter Jagemann, New York: for his creative work as consulting designer for the Exhibit, and for creating and executing the LIVING STILLS.



